

bosom he has launched. The sensation is that which one experiences in going to sea. The rattling train is easily transformed into the puffing and creaking steam-ship, while the interminable prairie, mingling its distant and softened green with the subdued azure of the summer sky, can be likened to nothing but the ocean's boundless expanse. The ever-recurring undulation of the prairie is the grand ocean-swell which utters perpetually a reminiscence of the last storm, while the evening sun, with dimmed lustre, settles down into the prairie's green sod, as to the mariner he sinks into the emerald bosom of the sea.

Illinois has been styled the garden state of the West. The deep, rich, pulverulent soil of the upland prairie, and especially its readiness for the plow, without the intervention of a year's hard labor in opening a clearing, have always constituted powerful attractions for the settler from the stony soils of New England, and the wooded regions of the other states. It is extremely doubtful, however, whether the absence of forests over the area of half a state possesses a balance of advantages. Forests possess immense utilities in addition to furnishing lumber and fuel. This discovery was long since made in the denuded regions of the older European countries; and Americans are talking at times as if they were growing wiser. Even the cobblestones of a New England or New York soil are not unmitigated inconveniences. During the day they absorb the warmth of the sun, and at night they retain it and impart it to the soil. In times of drought they screen the soil from the direct rays of the sun, and thus moderate the intensity of the heat. They diminish the evaporating surface of the soil, and thus diminish the effects of continued droughts. A loose stone is a shade; but, unlike a tree, it has no roots of its own to creep about and steal the moisture from weaker forms of vegetation. A few stones do not